

REMARKS

Applicant adds new claims 13-24; therefore, claims 1-24 are all the claims now pending in the application.

New claims 13-24 are analogous to claims 1-12, respectively, but avoid the “means-plus-function” terminology.

The Examiner provisionally rejects claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8 under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9 of a co-pending U.S. Patent Application No. 09/781, 277. In response, Applicant submits herewith a Terminal Disclaimer, and respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw this rejection accordingly.

The Examiner rejects claims 1, 2, 4 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Plunkett, and claims 3, 5-7 and 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Plunkett in view of Koyama et al. (Koyama). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections as follows.

Applicant’s claimed invention provides sound field correcting systems (claims 18) and methods (claims 9-12) for multi-channel audio systems having a plurality of signal transmission lines each of the transmission lines including an equalizer and a channel-to-channel audio signal level adjustor. The systems and methods comprising unique combinations of features and method steps, respectively, including *inter alia*, supplying a noise signal to respective signal transmission lines independently in correcting a sound field produced by a multi-channel audio system, detecting reproduced sounds of the noise signal, correcting frequency characteristics of the equalizers based on the detection results, and correcting an adjusted amount of the channel-

to-channel level adjustors based on the detection results (see Applicant's independent claims 1, 5 and 9).

None of the cited prior art references discloses or suggests such unique combinations of features and method steps. Plunkett (the Examiner's primary reference) discloses balance adjustment of gain control amplifiers, time delay compensation and independent gain adjustment in each channel (see Id., col. 3, line 28 through col. 4, line 17). In particular, Plunkett discloses a sound system where, when a channel equalizer is used, "command module 30 is made to provide appropriate frequencies in the test signal, corresponding to each band ..., and the test routine provides independent gain adjustment for each band in each channel" (see Id., col. 3, line 64 through col. 4, line 4).

Plunkett does not disclose, teach or suggest an audio system, or a method, where frequency characteristic correction of equalizers is performed with correction of adjusted amount of a plurality of channel-to-channel level adjustors, as recited in Applicant's independent claims 1, 5 and 9.

Therefore, Applicant's independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 4 and 8 (which incorporate all the novel and unobvious features of their base claim) are not anticipated by (i.e., are not readable on) Plunkett at least for this reason.

Koyama, the Examiner's secondary reference, does not supply the deficiencies of Plunkett as noted above with respect to independent claims 1, 5 and 9. Therefore, Applicant's claims 5 and 9, as well as the dependent claims 3, 6, 7 and 8-12 (which incorporate all the novel and unobvious features of their respective base claims) would not have been obvious from any reasonable combination of Plunkett and Koyama.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln No. 09/781,276

Atty Dkt No. Q62652

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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